

Border Clues

Read geographic evidence to compare ancient civilizations.

SS.6.G.1.7 "Use maps to identify characteristics and boundaries of ancient civilizations that have shaped the world today."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each natural feature that could mark an edge of a civilization. Circle each phrase that tells how a river, landform, or location helped people live, travel, or stay protected.

Ancient Civilizations on Maps

- ① Maps help historians see why ancient civilizations developed where they did. A map of ancient Egypt shows the Nile River running north to the Mediterranean Sea. Deserts lay to the east and west, while the Mediterranean formed a northern edge. The Nile supplied water, fish, and rich soil for farming. Because travel across deserts was difficult, these natural features helped protect and connect Egyptian settlements. The river also linked southern settlements with northern towns near the sea.
- ② Farther east, maps of Mesopotamia place many early cities between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. This region was part of the Fertile Crescent and had soil enriched by river floods. Unlike Egypt, Mesopotamia had broad plains rather than strong desert barriers on every side. Armies and traders could cross the plains, so separate city-states often competed. Rivers supported irrigation, trade, and writing centers. Modern Iraq includes much of this ancient river region today, showing how borders change.
- ③ On maps of the Indus Valley civilization, the Indus River flows from mountains toward the Arabian Sea. The Himalayas stood to the north, and dry lands lay west of the river valley. Cities such as Harappa and Mohenjo-daro used planned streets and drainage systems. Their location near rivers aided farming and travel. Today, Pakistan and northwest India cover much of the area once occupied by this civilization. Map boundaries help us compare ancient places with modern countries.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Name two natural features that formed Egypt's boundaries. Include the direction of each feature.

2 What geographic evidence shows that Mesopotamia had fewer natural barriers than Egypt?

3 According to the passage, what direction did the Indus River flow toward, and which mountain range was north of the valley?

4 Give one ancient civilization and modern country pairing that the passage says overlap.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Use this location note to make a three-row map evidence table for ancient China: The Huang He flowed through the central region and gave farmers water and fertile soil. The Gobi Desert lay north, and the Pacific Ocean lay east. In each row, classify the feature as a boundary or resource and explain its effect.

FEATURE	DIRECTION OR LOCATION	BOUNDARY OR RESOURCE?	EFFECT ON PEOPLE

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each natural feature that could mark an edge of a civilization. Circle each phrase that tells how a river, landform, or location helped people live, travel, or stay protected. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Name two natural features that formed Egypt's boundaries. Include the direction of each feature.	The Mediterranean Sea formed Egypt's northern edge, and deserts lay to the east and west.
2	What geographic evidence shows that Mesopotamia had fewer natural barriers than Egypt?	Mesopotamia had broad plains that armies and traders could cross, while Egypt had difficult deserts around it.
3	According to the passage, what direction did the Indus River flow toward, and which mountain range was north of the valley?	The Indus River flowed toward the Arabian Sea, and the Himalayas were north of the valley.
4	Give one ancient civilization and modern country pairing that the passage says overlap.	Mesopotamia and modern Iraq. Accept: the Indus Valley civilization and modern Pakistan or northwest India.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

FEATURE	DIRECTION OR LOCATION	BOUNDARY OR RESOURCE?	EFFECT ON PEOPLE
Huang He	central region	resource	It provided water and fertile soil for farming.
Gobi Desert	north	boundary	It made travel across the north more difficult.
Pacific Ocean	east	boundary	It formed an eastern edge of the region.

Accept equivalent geographic descriptions that correctly classify the Huang He as a resource and the Gobi Desert and Pacific Ocean as boundaries. Effects must connect a feature to farming, travel, protection, or an edge of the civilization.